

Message Text

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EXDIS

FOL RPT JERUSALEM 1300 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO USUN NEW YORK,
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QUOTE: S E C R E T JERUSALEM 1300

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, MARR, MOPS, UNSC, PLO, IS, LE

SUBJECT: ERSKINE TALKS WITH ARAFT AND KHOURY, MAY 5

SUMMARY: ERSKINE HAS REPORTED TO UNNY ON HIS SEPARATE TALKS WITH
ARAFAT AND KHOURY MAY 5 IN BEIRUT. ARAFT STATED CLEARLY AND
AT SOME LENGTH THAT PLO CONSIDERS CAIRO AGREEMENT TO BE BASIS
FOR FUTURE STATUS OF SOUTHERN LEBANON ALLOWING CONTINUED
PRESENCE OF ARMED PALESTINIANS. IN TALK WITH KHOURY, LEBANESE
AGREED TO SEND MORE GENDARMES SOUTH. KHOURY ALSO AGREED,
WITH IN CONTEXT OF ILMAC, TO HAVE LEBANESE AND ISRAELS MEET
TO DISCUSS FINAL PHASE OF IDF WITHDRAWAL AND ALSO AGREED TO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 116299

A MEETING BETWEEN HADDAD AND SENIOR LEBANESE OFFICERS
UNDER ILMAC AUSPICES. END SUMMARY.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ERSKINE'S REPORT TO NEW YORK ON HIS
MAY 5 TALKS IN BEIRUT WITH ARAFAT AND KHOURY AS PROVIDED
BY UN SOURCE WHO HAD LITTLE TO ADD EXCEPT TO INDICATE THAT
UN HEADQUARTERS JERUSALEM BELIEVES THAT ARAFAT'S CHEEKY

SUGGESTION THAT UNIFIL SHOULD COOPERATE WITH PALESTINIANS AND OFFER THEM FACILITIES AND MEANS OF SUPPLY MUST HAVE BEEN MADE MERELY "FOR THE RECORD."

BEGIN TEXT:

1. VISITED COLONEL SALAVN IN HOSPITAL THIS MORNING. HE LOOKED RELAXED AND IN GOOD SPIRITS THOUGH IN PAIN. HE SOUNED CONCERNED ABOUT OPERATIONS IN TYRE BUT I ADVISED HIM TO FORGET AND ASSURED HIM THAT ALL WAS WELL UNDER CONTROL. I EXPRESSED THE SERIOUS CONCERN OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ABOUT WHAT DID HAPPEN TO HIM AND HIS SINCERE WISHES FOR A SPEEDY RECOVERY. I ASSURED HIM THAT THE WORLD BODY WISHED HIM WELL.

2. AS PLANNED, I MET CHAIRMAN ARAFAT IN BEIRUT TODAY, 5 MAY 1978. PRESENT AT THE MEETING WERE GENERAL ABU WALID, CHIEF OF STAFF OF PLO, ABU HIHAD, PLO COMMANDER SOUTHERN REGION, BASIM AKL, DIPLOMATIC ADVISER TO ARAFAT AND CHIEF LIAISON OFFICER WITH UN. I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY CUQ, PRIETO AND CHAIRMAN ILMAC.

3. I EXPLAINED THAT PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO AVOID RECURRENCE OF INCIDENTS LIKE THE ONE OF 2 MAY IN TYRE AND TO ENSURE THAT NO FURTHER CLASHES OCCUR. I MENTIONED THAT ASSURANCES GIVEN BY ARAFAT TO SEC GEN ON PLO COOPERATION SHOULD BE TRANSLATED INTO PRACTICAL TERMS AND THAT UNIFIL HAS TO CARRY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 116299

OUT MANDATE ENTRUSTED TO IT BY SECURITY COUNCIL. OPPOSITION BY PLO WOULD CREATE ADVERSE IMAGE OF THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT. WITH RESPECT TO TASK OF UNIFIL I STRESSED THAT IT WAS, FIRST OF ALL, TO ENSURE UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES AND THEN TO PREVENT INFILTRATION INTO AREAS VACATED BY IDF, AS WELL AS TO ENSURE THAT UNIFIL AREA OF OPERATIONS IS NOT UTILIZED FOR HOSTILE ACTIVITIES. ANOTHER MAIN FUNCTION OF UNIFIL, I SAID, WAS TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT OF LDJDOH TO RE-ESTABLISH ITS AUTHORITY IN THE AREA.

4. ARAFAT REITERATED THAT HE WILL TRY TO OFFER ALL COOPERATION AND THAT INCIDENTS OF TYRE SHOULD NOT DAMAGE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLO AND UNIFIL. HE THEN EXPLAINED AT LENGTH THAT THE TYRE INCIDENTS WERE, IN FACT, THE RESULT OF THE UNSTABLE SITUATION OF LEBANON WHICH WAS A QUOTE JUNGLE UNQUOTE OF ARMS AND ARMED GROUPS. HE EXPRESSED HIS REGRETS FOR THE INJURIES SUSTAINED BY SALVAN AND EMPHASIZED THAT PLO WILL INVESTIGATE MATTER AND PUNISH THE CULPRITS. ON THE OTHER HAND, ARAFAT COMPLAINED THAT UNIFIL HAD BEEN SHOOTING AT PALESTINIANS AND SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO THE KILLING OF TWO INDIVIDUALS BY BY FRENCH BATT ON 1 MAY WHICH, HE SAID, TRIGGERED THE TYRE INCIDENTS. HE ADDED THAT THOSE TWO PALESTINIANS KILLED ON 1 MAY WERE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WHO HAD

BEEN KILLED WITHOUT WARNING. AT THIS MOMENT , I INTERVENED TO CLARIFY THAT A WARNING HAD BEEN GIVEN AND THAT UNIFIL RETURNED THE FIRE OPENED BY THOSE TWO PERSONS. ARAFAT ALSO COMPLAINED THAT UNIFIL HAD NOT RETURNED FIRE WHEN SHOT BY HADDADS PEOPLE. I ALSO CLARIFIED THAT HADDAD ELEMENTS HAD ONLY SHOT OVER THE HEADS OF UNIFIL SOLDIERS AND THAT WAS WHY FIRE HAD NOT BEEN RETURNED. I ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE NORWEGIAN BATTALION HAD BEEN SHOT BY PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS AND THAT FIRE HAD NOT BEEN RETURNED. I EMPHASIZED THAT WE SHOULD NOT ENTER INTO THIS KIND OF DISCUSSION ABOUT COMPLAINTS AND COUNTER-COMPLAINTS AND THAT WE SHOULD FIND A CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH TO THE PROBLEMS.

5. I MENTIONED TO ARAFAT HIS CONVERSATION WITH SECGEN ABOUT ESTABLISHING A UNIFIL PRESENCE IN CHATEAU DE BEAUFORT AND AT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 116299

NABATIYEH. I TOLD ARAFAT THAT WHEN UNIFIL OFFICERS WENT TO ESTABLISH CONTACT IN THOSE PLACES, THEY WERE TURNED DOWN. ARAFAT REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO NEED, IN FACT, FOR A UNIFIL LIAISON AT NABTIYEH AND THAT WE SHOULD TRY AGAIN TO MAKE CONTACT WITH CHATEAU DE BEAUFORT PEOPLE. HE ADDED THAT THERE WAS NOW A NEW PLO LIAISON OFFICER AVAILABLE TO UNIFIL AT A MEDICAL CLINIC LOCATED BETWEEN KALKABA AND HASBAIYE BRIDBE. ARAFAT ALSO EXPRESSED PLO WILLINGNESS TO ESTABLISH LOS AT LOWER LEVELS WITH ALL UNIFIL UNITS PARTICULARLY IN ACCESS ROADS AND BIRDGES.

6. ARAFAT THEN GAVE LENGHTY INTERPRETATION ABOUT REASONS WHY PALESTINIANS HAD BEEN AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. REFERRRED TO THE CAIRO AGREEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN FULLY ENDORSED BY ALL ARAB GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES, AND HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY THREE ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCES. HE SAID THAT PLO AND LEBANON ARE MEMBERS OF THE ARAB LEAGUE AND OF THE ARAB DEFENSE AGREEMENT. CONSEQUENTLY, PRESENCE OF PALSESTINIANS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WAS FOR PURPOSE OF DEFENDING AN ARAB TERRITORY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ARAB DEFENSE AGREEMENT. HE FURTHER SAID THAT PLO PRESENCE IN LEBANON WAS, IN FACT, A BY-PRODUCT OF LEBANSE SOVEREIGNTY JUST AS WELL AS UNIFIL WAS BY-PRODUCT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. MOREOVER, HE STATED THAT PALESTINIANS FIGHTERS HAD REMAINED IN SOUTHERN LEBANON EVEN DURING THE IDF OCCUPATION AND THERFORE UNIFIL SHOULD NOW HELP THOSE ELEMENTS BY OFFERING THEM FACILITIES AND MEANS OF SUPPLY. ARAFAT INDICATED THAT HE HAD ALREADY TRANSMITTED A REQUEST ON THIS MATTER TO THE SECRTEARY-GENERAL. ACCORDING TO THIS INTERPRETATION, ARAFAT CONCLUDED THAT UNIFIL SHOULD AVOID SHOOTING AT PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS, SECONDLY, OFFER THEM SUPPLY FACILITIES IN UNIFIL AREA OF OPERATONS AND THIRDLY, UNIFIL SHOULD STOP DESTROYING AMMUNITION CACHES AND WEAPONS HIDDEN IN THE AREA. ARAFAT STRESSED THAT THE MANDATE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF UNIFIL SHOULD BE INTEREPRETED IN ACCORDANCE TO THESE PRINCIPLES.
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 116299

HE REITERATED THAT RESOLUTION 425 DID NOT ASK FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF PALESTINIAN ARMED ELEMENTS FROM SOUTHERN LEBANON AND THAT UNIFIL SHOULD ACCORDINGLY INTERPRET ITS TASKS. ARAFAT INSISTED THAT PLO HAD NOT USED SOUTHERN LEBANON FOR CONDUCTING HOSTILE ACTIVITIES AGAINST ISRAEL AND THUS IF UNIFIL AGREED TO CO-EXIST WITH PLO IN THE ARA, PLO WILL GUARANTEE THAT NO SUCH HOSTILE ACTIVITIES WILL BE CARRIED OUT.

7. I EXPLAINED TO ARAFAT THAT UNIFIL WAS ESTABLISHED UNDER AUTHORITY OF SECURITY COUNCIL AND AS FORCE COMMANDER, IT WAS NOT MY DUTY TO ENTER INTO INTERPRETATIONS AND THAT THE INSTRUCTIONS I HAVE RECEIVED WERE AS FOLLOWS:

(1) TO PREVENT INFILTRATION OF ARMED ELEMENTS INTO UNIFIL AREA OF OPERATION BY USING FORCE, IF NECESSARY.

(2) TO DISARM ARMED ELEMENT FOUND INSIDE THE AREA OF OPERATIONS AND TO ESCORT THEM OUT OF THE AREA.

(3) TO PREVENT HOSTILE ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE AREA, DESTROYING UNAUTHORIZED AMMUNITIONS AND WEAPONS.
HOWEVER, I UNDERTOOK TO TRANSMIT TO THE SEC GEN ARAFAT'S POSITION ABOUT PLO PRESENCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AND UNIFIL TERMS OF REFERENCE. ARAFAT EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL WILL SOON CLARIFY THIS MATTER.

8. LATER SAME DAY, AFTER MEETING WITH ARAFAT, WE WENT TO VISIT GENERAL KHOURY, WE DISCUSSED GENERAL MATTERS OF RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE AUTHORITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AND KHOURY PROMISED THAT ADDITIONAL GENDARMES SHOULD BE SENT TO THE AREA SOON. HE ALSO EXPRESSED AGREEMENT TO MEETING OF LEBANESE AND ISRAELI REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS FINAL PHASE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF MIXED ARMISTICE COMMISSION. HE ALSO AGREED TO A MEETING BETWEEN MAJOR HADDAD AND SENIOR LEBANESE OFFICER UNDER UNIFIL AUSPICES. END TEXT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 116299

COMMENT. WASHINGTON MAY WISH EMBASSY BEIRUT TO FOLLOW UP DISCREETLY WITH KHOURY REGARDING HIS EXPRESSION OF LEBANESE WILLINGNESS TO MEET WITH IDF TO DISCUSS FINAL WITHDRAWAL AND WITH HADDAD.
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